

Legislative changes may affect you

This year, Governor Gregoire outlined three major health goals to improve the health of Washington residents, and to make our state a national leader in health care:

- Improving the quality and efficiency of health care in Washington.
- Making Washington the healthiest state in the nation.
- Covering all children in Washington with health insurance by 2010.

These goals led to several changes in state law. This *Hot Policy Page* explains how these changes may affect you.

Child care expenses

In addition to legislative changes, Basic Health has revised its requirements for deducting child care expenses.

Effective June 1, the amount Basic Health will allow you to deduct for child or dependent care expenses increased from \$650 to \$1,025 per month, as long as the child care was necessary for both parents to work or attend school full time.

We will not allow this deduction retroactively, but if you are asked for proof of income information from Basic Health, please be sure to tell us about eligible child and dependent care expenses, as explained on page 10 of your *2007 Basic Health Member Handbook*.

Washington State is committed to covering kids!

There's a new health care program available for kids in Washington. Governor Gregoire has signed the Children's Health Access law, which expands health care coverage to more Washington kids. The new law, administered by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), takes effect July 22, 2007.

The new program covers medical, dental, vision, and many other health care services. **Children currently enrolled in Basic Health or Basic Health Plus will not be automatically transferred to the Children's Health Access program.**

If you have kids, here's what to think about:

Find out which kind of coverage your child has now: Basic Health *Plus* or Basic Health.

- Kids on Basic Health *Plus* already get similar benefits at no cost. You do not need to change.
- Kids on Basic Health do not get these expanded benefits, and you are probably paying for their coverage. You do not have to change, but you may choose to. If so, call your doctor first to make sure he or she will still be able to see your children if you switch to this new program. (Let your doctor know it is a DSHS medical coupon program.) If you decide to change, call 1-877-KIDS-NOW. **Be sure to keep your children's Basic Health coverage until you get a letter from DSHS saying your child qualifies for the new program.**

Kids are eligible if their family's income is within the limits shown on the following table:

Total number in your family (including yourself)*	Monthly income limit for free coverage	Monthly income limit for low-cost coverage**
1	\$1,702	\$2,128
2	\$2,282	\$2,853
3	\$2,862	\$3,578
4	\$3,442	\$4,303

* If there are more than four people in your family, call 1-877-KIDS-NOW for an estimate.

** Low-cost coverage is \$15 per month, per child, up to a maximum of \$45 per month per family.

For more information, call DSHS at 1-877-KIDS-NOW.

This serves as official notice of changes to your Basic Health coverage, and is an addendum to your *Member Handbook*.

DSHS medical assistance coverage and Basic Health coverage

Persons eligible for health care coverage through Medicaid or other DSHS Medical Assistance programs may be asked to choose whether they will continue Basic Health coverage or coverage through DSHS. Also, those who choose to leave Basic Health for Medicaid coverage then lose Medicaid eligibility will be given priority enrollment, if they return to Basic Health right away after losing Medicaid coverage and they are still eligible for Basic Health coverage. This means if Basic Health has reached enrollment limits, these applicants will not have to wait as long for coverage.

Extended coverage available to foster kids

Effective July 22, 2007, foster kids will be eligible for expanded Medicaid coverage from the time they turn 18 until they are 21, as long as they are in state-contracted or tribal foster care in Washington State on their 18th birthday. This means that young adults who were released from foster care when they turned 18 may still be eligible for expanded benefits through Medicaid.



Good news for foster parents

Another change in this year's legislative session will help foster parents. Licensed foster parents with incomes within Basic Health's normal income guidelines will continue to pay just \$17 per month for their coverage. Effective October 1, 2007, however, foster parents with somewhat higher income may also qualify for Basic Health, as shown in the table below.

	Number of people in your family				Monthly premium
	1	2	3	4	
Gross Monthly Income	\$0 – \$1,701.75	\$0 – \$2,281.78	\$0 – \$2,861.80	\$0 – \$3,441.83	\$17
	\$1,701.76 – \$2,127.16	\$2,281.79 – \$2,852.19	\$2,861.81 – \$3,577.22	\$3,441.84 – \$4,302.25	\$50
	\$2,127.17 – \$2,552.58	\$2,852.20 – \$3,422.61	\$3,577.23 – \$4,292.64	\$4,302.26 – \$5,162.67	\$100

If you have more than four people in your family, or would like more information, call 1-800-660-9840.



To obtain this document in another format (such as Braille or audio), call our Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator at 360-923-2805. TTY users (deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired), call 360-923-2701 or toll-free 1-888-923-5622.

Si desea ayuda en español, llame al 1-800-321-0291. Для обслуживания на русском языке, позвоните, пожалуйста, по телефону 1-800-387-8224. 한국어로 도움을 원하시면 1-800-324-1658로 연락하십시오. Nếu quý vị muốn được giúp bằng tiếng Việt, xin gọi số 1-800-423-2231.